

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ALGIERS 0943

EXDIS

TUNIS AND RABAT FOR UNDER SECRETARY HABIB

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (HABIB, PHILIP C.), AG
SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY HABIB'S VISIT TO ALGIERS

1. SUMMARY: UNDER SECRETARY HABIB AND PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE 11 APRIL DISCUSSED MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICAN ISSUES DURING NINETY MINUTE SESSION AT PRESIDENCY. DISCUSSION CORDIAL AND FRANK. ON MIDDLE EAST BOUMEDIENE STRESSED ALGERIAN BELIEF THAT KEY IS RESOLUTION OF PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, BUT THAT ALGERIA PREPARED TO ACCEPT WHATEVER EGYPT, SYRIA AND PLO CAN AGREE ON. BOUMEDIENE STATED HE FOUND CURRENT SITUATION IN AFRICA "DISTURBING" BECAUSE OF POTENTIAL FOR SOVIET-AMERICAN CONFRONTATION; HE STRESSED ALGERIAN COMMITMENT TO TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, INVIOABILITY OF FRONTIERS AND DESIRE TO KEEP GREAT POWER RIVALRY OUT OF AFRICA. IN BRIEF REFERENCE TO SAHARA, HE REQUESTED US REVIEW ITS ARMS SUPPLY TO MOROCCO, STRESSING ALGERIA HAS NO AMBITIONS IN REGION AND WISHED AVOID PROBLEMS. IN CONCLUSION, BOUMEDIENE STATED US-ALGERIAN DIFFERENCES ALL IN PAST AND COMMON LINKS IN ALGERIAN DEVELOPMENT EFFORT CONSTITUTE SOLID BASE OF
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OUR CURRENT RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE AND UNDER SECRETARY HABIB REVIEWED MIDDLE EAST SITUATION AND AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS AT LENGTH AND MAGHREB EVENTS AND US-ALGERIAN RELATIONS BRIEFLY DURING NINETY MINUTE APRIL 11 MEETING.

3. MIDDLE EAST: HABIB BEGAN MEETING WITH IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF RECENT EVOLUTION OF MIDDLE EAST SITUATION FROM US VANTAGE POINT. BOUMEDIENE, NOTING THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT REFERENCES TO PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND TO PALESTINIAN HOMELAND REPRESENTED FIRST TIME ANY US PRESIDENT HAD SPOKEN IN THESE TERMS, POSED QUESTION "WHAT IS THE AMERICAN PLAN?" HABIB RESPONDED THAT US APPROACH IS TO ALLOW IDEAS TO DEVELOP AND CIRCULATE AND TO TRY TO NARROW DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONTENDING PARTIES SO THAT ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF SETTLEMENT WILL BE PRESENT WHEN GENEVA CONFERENCE RECONVENES AT END OF YEAR. HE STRESSED THAT THERE IS NO "US PLAN" FOR A SETTLEMENT. BOUMEDIENE REMAINED SKEPTICAL, INSISTING THAT GIVEN US INTEREST IN THE AREA, GIVEN US BELIEF THAT BASES FOR COMPROMISE NOW EXIST, AND GIVEN COMMENTS BY PRESIDENT CARTER, US SHOULD NOT BE "TOO MODEST" AND SHOULD "NOT HIDE ITS STRATEGY SINCE WE WILL ALL KNOW IT IN A FEW MONTHS." HE CONCLUDED "WHEN I KNOW YOUR STRATEGY, I CAN THEN COMMENT ON IT".

4. BOUMEDIENE SAID THAT AS FAR AS ALGERIANS WERE CONCERNED KEY TO MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM WAS CREATION OF PALESTINIAN STATE OR HOMELAND, WITH SECONDARY RELATED PROBLEM BEING JERUSALEM. BASIC PROBLEM, BOUMEDIENE SAID, WAS THAT ONE COULD NOT CHASE ARABS FROM THEIR HOMELAND AND THEN ASK THEM TO RATIFY RESULT. BOUMEDIENE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD NO ADVICE TO OFFER. HE STATED HE WOULD SIMPLY OFFER HIS OPINION THAT PATH TO SOLUTION PASSES FIRST BY THE PALESTINIANS AND THEN BY EGYPT AND SYRIA. AS FOR ALGERIA, HE SAID, IT CONFIDENTIAL

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WILL ACCEPT ANY SOLUTION WICH THESE THREE PARTIES ACCEPT: "ALGERIA CANNOT BE MORE EGYPTIAN THAN THE EGYPTIANS, MORE SYRIAN THAN THE SYRIANS, OR MORE PALESTINIAN THAN THE PALESTINIANS." IN RESPONSE TO HABIB QUESTION AS TO WICH PALESTINIAN GROUP BOUMEDIENE REFERRED WHEN HE SAID "PALESOQBCKNBOUMEDIENE RESPONDED "PLO".

5. HABIB DISCUSSED PROBLEMS SURROUNDING DEFINITION OF PEACE, EXPLAINING THAT FOR ISRAELIS RECOGNITION AND ACCEPTANCE OF ITS RIGHT TO EXIST IS KEY. BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED THAT ONE CANNOT EXPECT PLO TO STATE THAT IT ACCEPTS EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL WHEN PLO ITSELF HAS NO HOMELAND AND NO ONE HAS ACCEPTED ITS RIGHT TO EXIST. WHEN ASKED BY HABIB WHAT ALGERIANS THOUGHT OF PALESTINIAN CONFEDERATION WITH JORDAN, BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED THAT ALGERIA WOULD ACCEPT IDEA IF PLO ACCEPTED IT, BUT ADDED "I DOUBT THAT THEY WILL DO SO."

6. BOUMEDIENE SUMMED UP ALGERIA'S POSITION BY SAYING "ALGERIA'S POSITION IS CLEAR. ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS ARE PLO, EGYPT AND SYRIA. ALGERIA WILL ACCEPT ANY ACCORD THESE THREE ACCEPT. ALGERIA DOES NOT, HOWEVER, HAVE ANY PRETENSIONS ABOUT GETTING INVOLVED IN PROCESS OF ARRIVING AT THIS COMMON ACCORD."

7. AFRICA: HABIB STRESSED US SUPPORT FOR STRONG NATIONAL STATES AND NATIONALISM, FOR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AFRICAN STATES AND RESPECT FOR EXISTING FRONTIERS. HE OUTLINED US POLICIES OF NON-INTERVENTION, LIMITATION OF ARMS TRANSFERS TO AFRICA, AND OPPOSITION TO EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS. BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED THAT IN PAST US HAD TENDED TO WORK WITH RIGHT-WING UNPOPULAR DICTATORS AND THAT BY NOW RELYING ON POPULAR NATIONALISM WE RELYING ON "KEY FORCE IN AFRICA" AND MAKING "GOOD MOVE."
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ALGIRS 0943

EXDIS

TUNIS AND RABAT FOR UNDER SECRETARY HABIB

8. BOUMEDIENE STATED THAT HE FOUND CURRENT SITUATION IN AFRICA "DISTURBING". HE STATED THAT CONFRONTATIONS NO LONGER APPEARED TO BE UNIQUELY

AFRICAN BUT THAT NOW THE TWO GREAT WORLD POWERS WERE BEGINNING TO CONFRONT EACH OTHER IN CONTINENT. HE CITED EVENTS IN ANGOLA, ZAIRE, ETHIOPIA, BENIN, AND SOUTHERN AFRICA.

9. BOUMEDIENE STATED THAT HIS FEAR WAS THAT SUPER POWERS WOULD BECOME INVOLVED THROUGH THEIR PROXIES. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, US WAS USING MOROCCO, TO WHICH IT PROVIDES ARMS, TO ACT IN ZAIRE. HABIB REBUTTED CHARGE, STRESSING THAT MOROCCANS DID NOT CONSULT WITH US ABOUT THEIR DECISION. HE POINTED OUT THAT AS FAR AS WE KNEW US ARMS WERE NOT BEING USED BY MOROCCO IN ZAIRE, NOTING THAT THIS WOULD REQUIRE OUR PERMISSION.

10. HABIB STRESSED THAT IT WAS NOT US WHICH WAS INTERVENING IN AFRICA BUT THAT IT WAS SOVIETS, DIRECTLY WITH ARMS AND INDIRECTLY THROUGH THEIR PROXIES. IN ZAIRE, FOR EXAMPLE, HABIB SAID, US DID NOT WANT EXISTING GOVERN-
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MENT OVERTHROWN BY FORCES ARMED, TRAINED AND DIRECTED FROM OUTSIDE COUNTRY AND OUTSIDE CONTINENT.

11. BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED THAT ALTHOUGH HE FEARED "AFFAIR WILL BECOME DANGEROUS", HE DID NOT BELIEVE CUBANS WILL INTERFERE IN ZAIRE. HE SAID HE HAD RAISED QUESTION WITH CASTRO DURING CASTRO'S MARCH 31-APRIL 2 VISIT TO ALGIERS AND CASTRO HAD ASSURED HIM THAT THERE WERE NO CUBANS WITH KATANGANS AND HAD EMPHASIZED THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF SENDING ANY.

12. HABIB REVIEWED US SUPPORT FOR NIGERIAN MEDIATION EFFORT IN ZAIRE WITH BOUMEDIENE, EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PROBLEM UP TO AFRICANS TO RESOLVE, AND ASKED IF BOUMEDIENE HAD AN ADVISE TO OFFER AS TO HOW TO PROCEED. BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED THAT HE BELIEVED BOTH SOVIETS AND US SHOULD STAY OUT AND THAT HE ENDORSED NIGERIAN EFFORT. HE STRESSED THAT ALGERIANS WISHED TO AVOID DIVISION OF CONTINENT AND PLACED GREAT IMPORTANCE ON TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND INVIOABILITY OF BORDERS INHERITED FROM COLONIAL PAST. THIS VIEW, HE NOTED IN PASSING, WAS ONE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA THAT HAD LED TO SPLIT OVER SAHARA.

13. IN GENERAL DISCUSSION OF AFRICAN ISSUES, HABIB STRESSED THAT US CONCERNED ABOUT SOVIET AND LIBYAN ATTEMPTS TO CREATE TROUBLE THROUGHOUT THE CONTINENT, CITING LIBYAN INTERVENTION IN SUDAN, TUNISIAN NERVOUSNESS OVER LIBYAN INTENTIONS, AND CURRENT TENSION BETWEEN EGYPT AND LIBYA. BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED THAT

REGION NOW AT DANGEROUS MOMENT AND IT NECESSARY NOT TO AGGRAVATE SITUATION; HE NOTED SPECIFICALLY THAT "SUDAN IS ESSENTIAL FOR EGYPT". BOUMEDIENE ASKED WHAT US POSITION WAS ON ERITREA AND WHETHER WE SUPPORTED ERITREAN INDEPENDENCE. HABIB RESPONDED THAT SITUATION THROUGHOUT THIS PART OF CONTINENT EXTREMELY CONFUSED, THAT WE MAKING NO JUDGE-
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MENT ON ERITREAN AFFAIRS AND HAVE NO POSITION ON ERITREAN INDEPENDENCE, AND THAT WE WILL FOLLOW REGIONAL AND NATIONALIST OPINION.

14. SAHARA: BOUMEDIENE ASKED HABIB IF COULD SIMPLY ASK PRESIDENT CARTER TO STUDY SAHARA SITUATION FOR JUST FEW MINUTES. ALGERIA, BOUMEDIENE SAID, BELIEVES THAT US HAS PROVIDED TOO MUCH SUPPORT TO MOROCCO AND FEARED THAT THIS SUPPORT DERIVED FROM IDEOLOGICAL GOALS NOT JUST POLICY. BOUMEDIENE STRESSED THAT IF MOROCCO CONTINUED TO ARM ITSELF AS IT HAS BEEN FROM US, SPAIN, FRANCE, ETC., THERE WOULD BE PROBLEMS IN REGION AND ADDED THAT ALGERIANS HAD NO DESIRE FOR ANY PROBLEMS. HE STRESSED THAT ALGERIA WAS HAPPY WITHIN ITS OWN FRONTIERS, HAD NO TERRITORIAL AMBITIONS, BUT COULD NOT ALLOW MOROCCO TO MOVE INTO SAHARA TO SOLVE ITS OWN INTERNAL PROBLEMS.

15. US-ALGERIAN RELATIONS: BOUMEDIENE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT US-ALGERIAN DIFFERENCES -- VIETNAM, MIDDLE EAST, ETC. -- WERE IN THE PAST. ALGERIA'S BATTLE NOW IS FOR DEVELOPMENT; IN THIS BATTLE ALGERIANS ARE NOT ASKING FOR MONEY BUT ARE COUNTING ON THEIR OWN RESOURCES AND PAYING THEIR OWN WAY. THEY ARE AGAINST ALL IMPERIALISM BUT WILL WORK WITH SOVIETS, AMERICANS, BRITISH OR WHOMEVER, IN ORDER TO FURTHER ALGERIAN DEVELOPMENT. AMERICAN-ALGERIAN LINKS IN THIS ALGERIAN DEVELOPMENT EFFORT CONSTITUTE SOLID BASE OF OUR CURRENT RELATION .

16. BOUMEDIENE CONCLUDED WITH REQUEST THAT HABIB TRANSMIT HIS PERSONAL REGARDS TO PRESIDENT CARTER.LYNE

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